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Precedent Broken In House As CIA Operation Described

WASHINGTON, March 23 (CTPS)—Precedent was broken in Congress today when evidence of Soviet espionage gathered by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was presented on the House floor by Chairman L. Mendel Rivers (D-SC) of the House Armed Services Committee.

The CIA, the nation's worldwide spy network, is customarily so cloaked in secrecy that official references to it are rare. The number of its employees, the hundreds of millions of dollars it spends, and its operations are top secret.

Rivers produced a 10,000 word statement taken from Laszlo Szabo, a former major in the Hungarian intelligence and security service, who asked political asylum from the United States government last October. It contained disclosures of murder, blackmail, and forgery by Hungarian and Russian agents.

Such revelations no longer come under the heading of fresh news although Szabo aired some novel phases of Communist operations. Rivers' remarks, however, and the floor discussion which followed alerted members to the fact that they were getting information about the CIA and its surveillance by Congress hitherto withheld.

The debate indicated that the CIA, stung by attacks that it is a supergovernment, was launching a counter-attack through its friends in Congress. Members voiced tributes to its efficiency and denials that it is a power-grabbing organization. Rivers revealed there was a "CIA subcommittee" in his group which he had enlarged to 11 members. He said they are "kept constantly up to date"

with respect to all intelligence operations.

The identity of members of Congress, other than committee chairmen, cleared for access to CIA operations has been a matter of mystery in previous congressional discussions of the CIA.

Obviously in answer to demands that Congress set up a watch-dog committee to supervise the CIA, Rivers declared that the directors of the agency, Adm. W. F. Rayborn and his assistants regularly inform the subcommittee of all activities.

"The CIA does what the president tells it to do," he told the House. "It does not initiate action by itself, except, of course, the normal routine activities to be expected."

As if by prearrangement, Representatives William H. Bates (R-Mass), Porter Hardy (D-Va) and Leslie C. Arends (R-Ill), all members of the CIA subcommittee, rose and praised Rayborn for doing "a terrific job."